

WISCONSIN WELLHEAD PROTECTION NEWS

Fall 2001



CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations are in order for a number of communities who are or have been involved in wellhead protection (WHP) planning to protect their water supply wells. Almena, Cumberland, Downsview, East Troy, Oakfield and Sturgeon Bay have worked or are working with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) or Wisconsin Rural Water Association staff on wellhead protection plans, ordinances or both. You are commended for being proactive in protecting your water supply.

Communities which have developed wellhead protection plans for new wells since the last newsletter include Cambria, Elkhart Lake, Country Estates Sanitary District, Flambeau Correctional Center, Junction City, Lake Delton, Northfield Sanitary District 1, Norwalk, Plover, Rome Water Utility, Wausau, and Weston. Hats off to these communities as well for recognizing the importance of wellhead protection. Keep up the good work!

If you would like assistance from the Department in getting started, three DNR staff are available. Dave Johnson (608-261-6421 or johnsdm@dnr.state.wi.us) works with northeast and

south central Wisconsin communities. Dave Lindorff works with communities in the southeast part of the state. Randell Clark (608-267-7895 or clarkr@dnr.state.wi.us) works with communities in west, central and northern Wisconsin. All three have the same address and fax number (see below).

This issue of the newsletter introduces you to two people who can be of assistance to you in protecting groundwater, salutes someone who has gone above and beyond in promoting groundwater protection and education and identifies resources that you may want to explore to help with groundwater planning and management activities.

If you have ideas regarding topics or questions that could be addressed in future newsletters, contact me by phone (877-268-9355 toll free), by fax (608-267-7650), by email (lindod@dnr.state.wi.us) or regular mail (Wisconsin DNR, P. O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921).

Have a wonderful Fall!

Dave Lindorff, Editor

GROUNDWATER GUARDIAN COORDINATOR HIRED

The Central Wisconsin Groundwater Center recently hired Denise Kilkenny-Tittle to promote the Groundwater Guardian program in Wisconsin. Denise will work with active Wisconsin Groundwater Guardian communities and encourage and assist other communities to become involved in this groundwater protection program. The Groundwater Guardian program is dedicated to promoting community awareness and protection of groundwater supplies. Groundwater Guardian communities can earn national recognition from the Groundwater Foundation by implementing at least one groundwater protection activity per year. This might involve education, conservation, public policy or pollution prevention. Current Wisconsin

Groundwater Guardian communities include Chippewa Falls, Eau Claire County, Green Bay, Marathon County, Marshfield, Portage County and Waukesha.



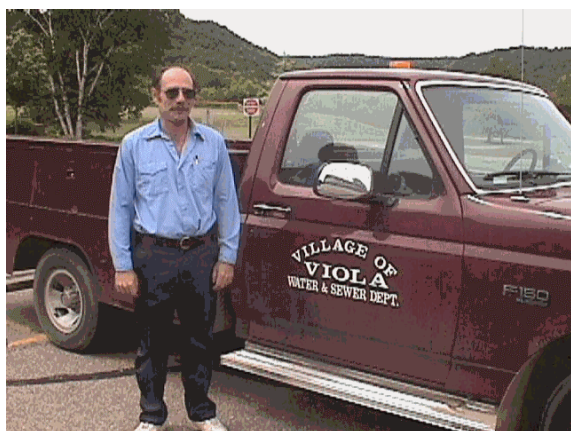
Denise plans to establish a website soon for the Wisconsin Groundwater Guardian communities at www.uwsp.edu/cnr/gwguardian. If your community might be interested in exploring this program, contact Denise at 715-346-2722 or by email at denise.kilkenny-tittle@uwsp.edu.

NEW FACE AT WISCONSIN RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION

Ed Morse has been hired by the Wisconsin Rural Water Association (WRWA) to work with communities on wellhead protection planning. He replaces Gary Lueck. Ed brings a wealth of experience to the WRWA. The WDNR staff will work with Ed to continue to coordinate our efforts with the communities of Wisconsin. Ed works out of the WRWA office in Plover and can be reached at 715-344-7778 or ed-morse@excite.com.

ABOVE AND BEYOND!

Kudos to Viola Municipal Water System Operator, Dan Baker. For the past 10 years, Dan has been promoting groundwater protection and water



conservation ideas by sponsoring an annual poster contest for the 7th grade students at Kickapoo Area School.

"Wisconsin Rural Water Association held a statewide poster contest about 11 years ago," said Baker. "The kids in our area really took an interest, so when WRWA stopped, I took it over locally." Each year Dan secures savings bonds for the first and second-place winners, and a participation prize for the runner-ups. This year's first and second place winners took home \$100 and \$50 savings bonds, respectively, and all participants received a household water conservation kit.

Dan's involvement goes beyond a few prizes. Kickapoo Area School Principal, Mr. Keifer, credits Dan with a significant change to the school's curriculum: Local government operating systems, including the municipal water system, are now taught as a regular part of the civics class.

"It was Dan's desire to continue the contest that originally spurred the previous principal to petition for the curriculum change," said Keifer. "It has been a great benefit to both the kids and the community."

Keep up the good work Dan!

GROUNDWATER WEBSITE

If you're looking for basic information on groundwater or ideas for protecting your water supply wells, take a look at the webpage created by Portage County: www.uwsp.edu/water/portage. A variety of groundwater-related information is available at this website which was unveiled in the past few months. The site includes a basic introduction to groundwater, a variety of teaching materials, a kids activities page, plus information on managing this important resource and taking action to protect groundwater. Although specific data and maps focus on Portage County, about 75% of the information on the site is applicable to other areas of the state. Besides information, the site also provides links to a variety of other groundwater-related websites such as organizations, agencies, education materials and more. Check out this expansive groundwater website.

DRINKING WATER AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Over the next several years, communities will be involved in comprehensive planning as a result of the "Smart Growth" legislation passed in 2000. Part of that effort will include planning for your community's drinking water supply. Wisconsin is

blessed with abundant clean groundwater. However, over the past ten years, land use activity has stressed both the quality and quantity of Wisconsin's groundwater. Some communities are already struggling with how to address one or both of these issues. It is never too early to begin thinking about your long-term drinking water needs and how your community's future development might impact that drinking water source. Planning can be very beneficial in heading off potentially serious quantity or quality problems down the road.

In order to make wise decisions about your community's drinking water and groundwater resources, it's important to understand your geologic and groundwater setting. Valuable information would include maps of the water table in your area and the recharge area and zone of influence for your wells. Another important piece is an inventory of potential contamination sources that might affect your wells. These are the first 4 elements of a wellhead protection plan. The WDNR publication, "A Template for Preparing Wellhead Protection Plans for Municipal Wells", describes how to go about getting this information. Dave Johnson, Randell Clark or Dave Lindorff can help you get information to develop a basic understanding of your geologic and groundwater setting.

As staff from the WDNR and other state agencies looked at the nine elements required in a comprehensive plan, it became apparent that groundwater considerations are important in each of the elements. The WDNR and other Groundwater Coordinating Council agencies intend to prepare a series of fact sheets to assist communities in pulling together and evaluating groundwater and drinking water information for the natural resources element and the other elements as well. If you have ideas for topics or information that could be included in a fact sheet, please contact Dave Lindorff at the address in this newsletter. As the fact sheets are completed, they will be publicized through this newsletter and other means.

Guidance documents for some of the elements have been or are being prepared. Contact the Department of Administration's Office of Land Information Services at (608) 267-2707 or www.doa.state.wi.us/olis/ for more information.



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DEALING WITH POTENTIAL SOURCES OF CONTAMINATION

One of the struggles many communities face in maintaining water quality is how to deal with existing facilities within their wellhead protection area that could potentially impact their wells. There may be gas stations, dry cleaners, chemical facilities and other potential contamination sources that could threaten that community's wells.

One of the resources available to local communities to address these facilities is the UW-Extension Solid and Hazardous Water Education Center (SHWEC). Specialists from the Center work with county UW-Extension agents to enhance Wisconsin's environment and economy by providing education and technical assistance programs to businesses and communities on source reduction, solid waste management and pollution prevention. They provide this technical advice, training and assistance from a non-regulatory framework.

If you'd like to learn more about their services, you can explore the SHWEC website at www.uwex.edu/shwec. This is a good University resource that be very helpful in your planning efforts to protect your water supply. SHWEC staff can be reached electronically at SHWEC@uwm.edu or by phone at the following numbers:
Green Bay 920-465-2707
Madison 608-262-0385
Milwaukee 414-227-3160
Stevens Point 715-346-2793

ADDRESSING FUTURE LAND USES

Long-term planning to protect a community's water supply includes not only existing facilities but also making sure that future land uses won't threaten the water supply.

Each community has a number of options available for limiting the type of future land use development to minimize the potential for groundwater contamination. A number of Wisconsin communities have chosen to adopt zoning or overlay ordinances that prohibit certain land uses in a specified area. These ordinances typically identify land uses that are allowed, those which are prohibited, and those which may be allowed conditionally. Four example ordinances have been compiled at www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/gw/EXORDWH.P.HTM

Other options are discussed in "Guide to Community Planning in Wisconsin" by Brian Ohm, published by Cooperative Extension (608-262-3466 or

www.uwex.edu/ces/pubs/) in 1999.

“INTO THE OUTDOORS” TO FEATURE DRINKING WATER

The WDNR, in collaboration with Discovery Television, sponsored a natural resources series for kids, “Into the Outdoors” this year starting in January. The program is aimed at 8-12 year olds and is intended to interest this age group in outdoor activities. During 2002, one of the segments will focus on drinking water and will include video shot at a groundwater festival in Marshfield. The show featuring our friends from Marshfield is scheduled to air statewide January 19 and 20, 2002 and again on October 19 and 20, 2002. Typically, the show will be on either Saturday or Sunday morning, but you should check your local listings for exact times and stations. As soon as the entire Into the Outdoors schedule is finalized for the new year, it will be posted at www.dnr.state.wi.us/ce/intotheoutdoors.htm. Keep checking this website for information on the program.

The Wisconsin Wellhead Protection Newsletter is a publication of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources’ Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater. Its purpose is to provide current information on wellhead protection topics. It is published in the spring and fall and as needed.

Comments, questions, suggestions and articles are welcome and can be sent to: David Lindorff, Editor, Wisconsin Wellhead Protection Newsletter Department of Natural Resources, P. O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921
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The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. 20240. This newsletter is available in an alternate format upon request. If interested, please contact David Lindorff, Editor.
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